

How to Insert a Catheter (Women)

General Information

You will use a catheter to empty your bladder. This process is called intermittent self-catheterization.

Emptying your bladder is important in preventing urinary tract infections. How often you use the catheter is decided by your doctor.

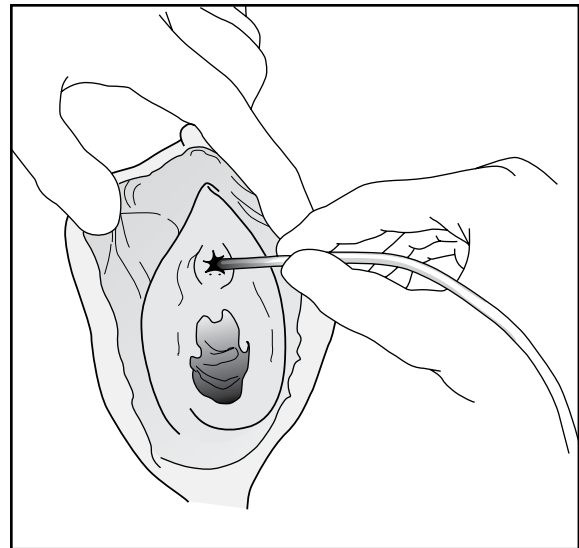
While you are using the catheter, follow these guidelines:

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Use the catheter as often as your doctor suggests. In general, this will be every 4 hours during the day and every 6 hours at night.
- You can use the catheter until it becomes too soft to guide or too hard to use. When this happens, throw it away and use a new one.
- Wash your hands with warm, soapy water before and after handling the catheter.

Catheter Insertion

To insert the catheter, do the following:

- Gather the catheter, washcloth, soap and water-soluble lubricant and mirror (optional).
- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Sitting on the toilet, hold the labia apart and clean your perineal area from front to back.
- Lubricate the tip of the catheter.
- Hold the catheter one-half inch from the top and direct it slightly upward, inserting it until urine returns.



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Where to insert the catheter.

- Let the urine flow until it stops. If you need to measure your urine, drain the urine into a measuring container. If you are not measuring, use the toilet. Slowly remove the catheter.
- Wash the catheter with soap and water, and rinse it inside and out with plain water. Let it dry and put it in a clean container.
- Write down the times and amounts of your catheter use and voiding. Also record any times of incontinence. Your doctor will need this information.

(over)

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